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Official Records

First Committee
21st meeting
Friday, 2 November 2001, 3.30 p.m.
New York

Chairman: Mr. Erdös ..... (Hungary)

The meeting was called to order at 3.40 p.m.

Agenda items 64 to 84 (*continued*)

Action on all draft resolutions submitted under all items

The Chairman: This afternoon, the Committee will take action on draft resolutions listed in informal working paper No. 4 before us. Some changes have been made in that working paper as we have moved on. I will be informing members about those changes, in terms of both sequence and of the existence or non-existence of drafts ready for action today.

I call on those delegations wishing to introduce revised draft resolutions.

Mr. Albin (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): The convening of an international conference to identify ways of eliminating nuclear dangers in the context of the commitment to eliminating weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons, is one of the most important elements of the decisions taken by our heads of State and Government at the Millennium Summit.

The fundamental reason for my delegation's submission of draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.16 lies in the importance it attaches to that decision and to following it up appropriately. Since the draft resolution was first submitted, the delegation of Mexico has carried out intensive and extensive consultations. When my delegation submitted the text in open consultations, we appreciated that this was clearly a complex issue. Many delegations from different groups approached the Mexican delegation to make comments. We did our very best to incorporate the proposals we received into the text.

Perhaps the most common comment made by delegations touched on the timeliness of launching this initiative. We did our best to dispel doubts. The time assigned to the First Committee may not have been sufficient to allow us to help other delegations better to appreciate the positive opportunities offered by the immediate launching of such a conference.

We therefore reached the conclusion that more time is required for consultation to explain the objectives of the draft resolution and thus to raise the level of support for the initiative, which remains valid and alive. For these reasons, the Mexican delegation will not insist that the General Assembly take a decision at this session on the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/56/L.16.

Mexico is convinced of the need to continue to work to make progress on the international disarmament agenda, particularly with regard to nuclear disarmament. In that spirit, we have decided to submit for the First Committee's consideration a draft decision contained in document A/C.1/56/L.60, by which the General Assembly would decide to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-seventh session an item entitled "United Nations conference to identify ways of eliminating nuclear dangers in the context of nuclear disarmament". We are sure that all delegations will appreciate my delegation's efforts in submitting

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this draft decision and that the Committee will receive it favourably.

I cannot conclude this statement without reiterating our profound gratitude to all those delegations that have supported and encouraged us over the past few weeks.

The Chairman: I would like to draw representatives' attention to one change in the text of draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.35/Rev.1.

In paragraph 9, the words "including their means of delivery" should be removed, so that the paragraph would read:

> "*Calls upon* all States to redouble their efforts to prevent and curb the proliferation of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, confirming and strengthening, if necessary, their policies not to transfer equipment, materials or technology that could contribute to the proliferation of those weapons."

Mr. Noboru (Japan): I have asked for the floor to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.35/Rev.1. We have received the suggestions and comments and heard some concerns of several delegations with regard to the Japanese draft resolution entitled "A path to the total elimination of nuclear weapons". First of all, I wish to thank all those delegations that conveyed their views to us in a very frank and constructive manner. We have conducted intensive consultations with other delegations and we believe that draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.35/Rev.1, before us, has accommodated most of these comments and concerns.

I would like to point out four salient changes, together with their rationales. The first, with regard to the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), some delegations prefer a more balanced way of presenting the IAEA safeguards agreements and their additional protocols. Therefore, to the ninth preambular paragraph, we have introduced the phrase "the International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards system" and both the IAEA safeguards agreements and the additional protocols are mentioned.

In the same manner, we have also combined former operative paragraphs 11 and 12 to make a new operative paragraph 11 in order to avoid redundancy in the previous text, while maintaining the reference to the universalization of both the safeguards agreements and the additional protocols. That is the first point.

The second point regards operative paragraph 3 of the original text of A/C.1/56/L.35. Some delegations expressed the concern that the significance of "an unequivocal undertaking" to accomplish the total elimination of nuclear arsenals taken at the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) was somehow weaker than one would want, and that the original text could therefore undermine the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference. That was certainly not my delegation's intention. Therefore, in order to dispel such concern we have changed the language in operative paragraph 3 as follows. First, we deleted the word "taking" from the *chapeau* of original paragraph 3, so as to avoid misunderstanding about "an unequivocal undertaking", which appears in subparagraph (e) of paragraph 3, as a step to be taken in the future.

Secondly, to subparagraph (e) of operative paragraph 3, we added the phrase "as agreed in the 2000 Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference" right after the word "States" in the first line of paragraph 3 (e), in order to clarify and confirm that the nuclear-weapon States had already made this undertaking at that Conference in 2000.

In this regard, I would like to reaffirm Japan's firm belief that it is the common understanding of all States parties to the NPT that this "unequivocal undertaking" was already made at the 2000 NPT Review Conference. We also believe that it is necessary to keep stressing the importance of this undertaking. In this regard, we are of the view that last year's resolution, which only welcomed this "unequivocal undertaking" in the preambular part, was not strong enough. So this is why in this year's resolution we placed "an unequivocal undertaking" not in the preambular part, but in the operative part, under a strong *chapeau* to stress its central importance.

With regard to the relationship between nuclear disarmament and general and complete disarmament, we used exactly the same formulation as that of the Final Document of the Review Conference. Therefore, this draft resolution does not in any way undermine the achievement made by that Review Conference. Instead, we believe that it significantly strengthens that achievement.

Thirdly, regarding paragraph 3 (a) on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), we

have decided to use stronger language — that of the NPT Final Document. This is in operative paragraph 3 (a). Here we believe that it is of paramount importance to firmly preserve the language that we agreed to a year ago, despite the difficult circumstances surrounding the entry into force of the CTBT. We also have to take full consideration of the significance of the Conference convened pursuant to article XIV of the CTBT, to be held the week after next in New York.

Finally, with regard to operative paragraph 9, as the Chairman just corrected the clerical mistake, we deleted the phrase "the means of delivery". We believe that it is important to ensure the non-proliferation of, and reduce the threats posed by, the means of delivery of weapons of mass destruction. We deleted this particular phrase because the concept of the means of delivery is already included in "nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction". To specify it here might prejudge the ongoing complex international discussions on missile proliferation. We will continue to contribute to international discussions on the issue of missiles, including those in the United Nations Panel of Governmental Experts on Missiles.

Finally, in introducing draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.35/Rev.1, I sincerely hope that this draft resolution will be adopted with overwhelming support.

Mr. Khairat (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): With regard to the correction you just made, Mr. Chairman, and endorsed by the delegation of Japan regarding operative paragraph 9, is my understanding that the Secretariat will issue a corrigendum in this regard correct?

The Chairman: We will certainly have to have a clean text that will be the final one and will not contain in operative paragraph 9, on page 4, the words that were mentioned by the representative of Japan and myself, so "including their means of delivery" will be out and we will have a clean text at our disposal.

After having heard statements so far, let me ask members to proceed and take action on the draft resolutions contained in informal working paper No. 4. We will first take up cluster 1, entitled "Nuclear weapons", and we will take up draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.1/Rev.1, entitled "Preservation of and compliance with the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-ballistic Missile Systems". Before taking action, I shall call on those delegations wishing to explain their position or vote before taking action on draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.1/Rev.1.

Mr. Atieh (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): Like all countries, Syria has welcomed, within the context of the United Nations, the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems, because this Treaty promotes stability and global strategic balance and constitutes an integral part of the set of bilateral and multilateral disarmament treaties and agreements. Syria calls for full and strict compliance with the provisions of this important Treaty. However, the language used in the seventh preambular paragraph and operative paragraph 5 of draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.1/Rev.1 — the main thrust of the draft resolution — distances it from its main objective. In fact, we feel that the language used in these two paragraphs encourages violation of the objectives of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems Treaty, and therefore runs counter to. the primary purpose of the draft resolution before the Committee.

Thus, my delegation would like to voice its strong reservation regarding the provisions of these two paragraphs. Despite our strong reservation, however, my delegation will, as I have indicated and in the interest of global strategic balance and stability and in view of the importance of compliance with international treaties, vote in favour of this draft resolution.

Mr. McGinnis (United States of America): The position of the United States on draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.1 and its predecessors has been consistent ever since this proposal was first introduced into the General Assembly. Recently, however, the principal sponsor introduced a revised version, and my delegation has been asked by several colleagues whether this changes the United States attitude towards this resolution. The answer is "no".

The United States firmly believes that issues regarding the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty remain a matter for the Treaty parties. As we have repeatedly pointed out, discussions have intensified in recent months between the United States and the Russian Federation on a new strategic framework, including a revised approach to the ABM Treaty. In these circumstances, it is even more inappropriate that this body take up the subject of the ABM Treaty.

When the distinguished representative of the Russian Federation introduced draft resolution

A/C.1/56/L.1/Rev.1, he himself said that the new language did nothing to change the basic thrust of the resolution. Thus, the United States will vote "no" on draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.1/Rev.1, and we urge others to do the same.

Mr. Alimov (Tajikistan) (*spoke in Russian*): My delegation would like to speak on the issues underlying draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.1/Rev.1, "Preservation of and compliance with the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Systems". In keeping with Article 19 of the Charter, our delegation cannot, unfortunately, take part in the vote. However, if we did have a right to vote, the Republic of Tajikistan would vote in favour of this draft resolution. We believe that the ABM Treaty is the basis for strategic stability and continues to effectively play its role as one of the cornerstones for the entire international legal system in the sphere of disarmament and non-proliferation.

Some 20 other treaties and agreements on the reduction and limitation of nuclear weapons, either legally or by implication, are linked with and depend on this Treaty. This once again underscores that, despite the fact that a limited number of countries are party to the ABM Treaty, it serves as the basis of security of virtually every State, be it small or large, and its observance, in our view, cannot be considered something that is a matter only for the parties to the Treaty themselves.

We would like to recall that the world community expressed its support for the ABM Treaty by adopting by a majority, two years in a row, resolutions in favour of it. Tajikistan was among those countries that consistently voted for the resolutions. These resolutions have played a clearly positive role in creating a favourable climate in the international community with a view to ensuring strategic stability.

We believe that it is necessary, and urge delegations to vote for draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.1/Rev.1.

Mr. Durrani (Pakistan): I have taken the floor to express Pakistan's views on this item before the First Committee. We believe that the international community should reach a consensus on the relationship between effective and offensive missile systems, so as to preserve and sustain strategic stability, both at the global and region levels. The Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty is widely regarded as a pillar of global strategic stability. We believe a change in the present arrangement, if at all required, should evolve through a cooperative approach among all concerned States. This could avoid a revival in the strategic arms race between the major Powers. Pakistan therefore supports the broad objectives of this draft resolution and will vote in favour.

We are nevertheless concerned that the draft has not addressed the equally important issue of preserving regional stability, which can be threatened by the introduction of ABM systems in various regions of the world, including the Taiwan Strait, South Asia and North-East Asia. We would urge the principal sponsor of this resolution to exercise self-restraint in considering the supply of an ABM system to our eastern neighbour. The introduction of ABM systems, such as the S-300, could be a factor in destabilizing the situation of mutual deterrence, which currently exists in South Asia.

Mr. de la Fortelle (France) (*spoke in French*): The First Committee is to take action today on draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.1/Rev.1, entitled "Preservation of and compliance with the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Systems". Clearly, the world today has changed, and the conditions for international balance need to be redefined. This redefinition is under way, and the delegation of France notes with satisfaction that discussions were launched at the highest level on this item between the United States and Russia, and among all States, as the debate in this room shows.

However, the text we have been considering, which is almost identical to the one we had in previous years, does not reflect this evolution nor does it offer any indication of the keys to a new international system. For this reason, my delegation has decided this year to abstain from voting on this draft resolution. It is still essential to see to it that the international system that we have known is not set aside in favour of a non-binding system that could give rise to new competition. The strategic international balance in the new climate that has emerged from the end of the cold war must be safeguarded. The deliberations therefore should be pursued and intensified. My country will take part in them, without abandoning its convictions.

Mr. Seetharam (India): As it did last year, India will vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.1/Rev.1, as we wish to reaffirm the importance of the full implementation, in good faith, of

all existing bilateral and multilateral arms control treaties, including the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty. That Treaty provides for an agreed basis for the architecture of a number of disarmament and arms control agreements. As we await the outcome of the efforts being undertaken by the States concerned to develop commonly agreed approaches to the core issues germane to the Treaty, we believe that the points stressed in the draft resolution remain valid.

Mr. Baeidi Nejad (Islamic Republic of Iran): The Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty is the cornerstone of strategic stability. Every effort should therefore be made to preserve the integrity of that Treaty. The Treaty is now more than a mere arrangement between two countries; it is not for them alone to decide on the fate of such an essential instrument. Any change to or revision of the provisions of the Treaty would affect the international security environment and destabilize the whole strategic balance. Furthermore, any change to or revision of the Treaty would stimulate a new arms race, particularly in the nuclear area. My delegation therefore believes that the adoption of the draft resolution before us is particularly relevant to the objectives and purposes of the General Assembly, and we strongly support the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/56/L.1/Rev.1.

The Chairman: The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.1/Rev.1.

A recorded vote has been requested.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the voting.

Mr. Sattar (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.1/Rev.1, entitled "Preservation of and compliance with the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems".

The draft resolution was introduced by the representative of the Russian Federation at the 13th meeting, on 23 October, and the revised text was introduced at the 18th meeting, on 31 October. The names of the sponsors of the draft resolution are listed in document A/C.1/56/L.1/Rev.1 and A/C.1/56/INF/2. In addition, Côte d'Ivoire has become a sponsor of the draft resolution.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Armenia, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kiribati, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Turkmenistan, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia

Against:

Israel, Micronesia (Federated States of), United States of America

Abstaining:

Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Monaco, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Samoa, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yugoslavia

Draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.1/Rev.1 was adopted by 80 votes to 3, with 63 abstentions.

The Chairman: I now call on those representatives who wish to speak in explanation of vote on the draft resolution just adopted.

Mr. Coutts (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems is recognized as the cornerstone of the maintenance of strategic stability and as a basis for the future reduction of strategic offensive weapons. The Treaty has played a fundamental role in guaranteeing international peace and security, thus demonstrating its universal purpose. We would like therefore to express our concern about the danger of developing and setting up an anti-ballistic defence system and of searching for military technologies capable of being used in outer space. That would contribute, inter alia, to eroding the global climate favourable to disarmament and international security. However, we abstained on the vote on the draft resolution in the hope that the parties to the Treaty will eventually come to an agreement on this very important issue.

Ms. Taguiang (Philippines): My delegation would like to put its vote of abstention in perspective. The Philippines shares the view of many delegations that the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty plays a vital role in maintaining global security in general and constraining missile proliferation in particular. The issue is therefore of great concern to all of us. However, the Philippines adheres to the view that dialogue on the issue of the ABM Treaty should be kept open, first and foremost among the parties to the Treaty. The Philippines notes the recent bilateral talks between the parties to the Treaty. We await with keen interest the result of the visit of the President of the Russian Federation to the United States to discuss in full the future of the ABM Treaty. The Philippines welcomes that spirit of dialogue, and the desire for mutual understanding surrounding those talks. They will contribute not only to a better understanding of the Treaty parties' specific concerns, but also to a greater appreciation by the international community of the issues that are important for the parties to the ABM Treaty in the interests of world peace and security.

The Philippines continues to support the ABM Treaty, and shares the international community's anticipation that an agreement or understanding on the status of the Treaty can be reached between its parties, optimistic as we are that the parties to the Treaty will continue to engage in dialogue and arrive at a mutually acceptable arrangement that will redound to the benefits of global peace and security.

Mr. Heinsberg (Germany): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the following countries: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey and the United Kingdom.

I would like to explain why we decided to abstain in the vote on draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.1/Rev.1 on the preservation of and compliance with the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems (ABM).

We believe that the way the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty is dealt with in the First Committee should have the support of both parties to that Treaty. We note that, as last year, this is not the case. Therefore, we have decided to abstain in the voting on the draft resolution.

We recognize the key importance of the ABM Treaty in contributing to strategic stability over the past decades. The Russian Federation and the United States are engaged in intensive bilateral consultations on a new strategic framework, with a view to strengthening strategic stability and continuing the reduction in the offensive arsenals of both sides.

In this perspective, we look forward to the forthcoming summit meeting between President Bush and President Putin in the United States. We welcome and support this continuing dialogue and express our sincere hope that it will lead to agreement fostering strategic stability and serving as a basis for further reductions of nuclear weapons, in pursuance of the commitments set out in article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and reaffirmed in the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Conference.

In this context, we reaffirm that the NPT remains the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament.

Mr. Krokhmal (Ukraine) (*spoke in Russian*): Ukraine abstained in the voting on the draft resolution entitled "Preservation of and compliance with the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems", contained in document A/C.1/56/L.1/Rev.1.

In this regard, my delegation would like to state that Ukraine has consistently been in favour of an effective global international security system. We recognize the key role played in recent decades by the

Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems in the system of international legal instruments in the field of nuclear disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation.

Ukraine hopes that the intensive recent dialogue between the United States and the Russian Federation to address the issues related to the Treaty will prove effective in producing agreements that will contribute to achieving an appropriate level of strategic stability worldwide. We anticipate that the upcoming meeting of delegations of nations that are involved in the implementation of the Treaty, to be held in December this year in Geneva, will help us to reach effective compromise solutions.

My delegation would also like to inform the Committee that Ukraine consistently meets its commitments under the START Treaty and that in October Ukraine destroyed its last intercontinental ballistic missile silo launcher.

Mr. Salander (Sweden): My delegation would like to explain why Sweden decided to abstain in the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.1/Rev.1, "Preservation of and compliance with the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems".

We note with satisfaction the ongoing consultations between the United States and the Russian Federation on a new strategic framework, which are reflected in the new operative paragraph 7 of the draft resolution.

In particular, we welcome the indications that both sides are prepared to make deep cuts in their strategic nuclear arsenals. It is the view of Sweden that decisions on such reductions should preferably take the shape of formalized agreements which are verifiable, transparent and irreversible.

Sweden believes that the way in which the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty is dealt with in the General Assembly should have the support of both parties to the Treaty. Consequently, we wish to underline the need for consensus on this resolution. We regret that, in spite of recent positive developments, there is still disagreement on how to address the issue in this Committee.

Sweden has repeatedly expressed its concern about the possible effects on disarmament and non-proliferation of unilateral actions related to the possible deployment of a national missile defence system. That said, Sweden does not share the overriding preoccupation with strategic stability expressed in the draft resolution. The concept of strategic stability is closely linked with cold-war doctrines, which, while they have formed an important part of traditional arms control negotiations, should, in Sweden's view, not be the sole basis for disarmament and non-proliferation in the post-cold-war era. These should, to a greater extent, be based on agreements such as the Final Document of the Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

These considerations motivated Sweden's abstention in the voting on this draft resolution.

Mr. Thapa (Nepal): The reasons for which my delegation voted in favour of this draft resolution for the last two years are still valid. Any undermining of the integrity of the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty would have a negative impact on global strategic stability, hence the objectives of the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/56/L.1/Rev.1, entitled "Preservation of and compliance with the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems", are important and deserve support.

Mr. Fils-Aimé (Haiti) (*spoke in French*): As my delegation has already mentioned to the Secretariat, we would like to ensure that Haiti is included in the list of sponsors of the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/56/L.1/Rev.1.

The Chairman (*spoke in French*): We will make sure that Haiti is indeed included in the list of sponsors.

(*spoke in English*)

We will now turn our attention to the next draft resolution in informal working paper No. 4, which is contained in document A/C.1/56/L.9/Rev.1, entitled "African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty".

I have a request from two delegations who wish to make general statements before we proceed with the draft resolution, and I will give them the floor as an exception. But for the sake of orderliness, I urge delegations to make general statements before we take up the clusters on a given day. That would help us to plan our Committee's work more efficiently. With this proviso, I call on the representative of Algeria to make general comments on draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.9/Rev.1.

Mr. Maandi (Algeria) (*spoke in Arabic*): I had hoped to speak before the voting and before reaching this stage of our work, so I wish to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for giving me the floor.

I merely requested the floor to make some general observations pertaining to the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/56/L.9/Rev.1, entitled "African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty". This draft resolution is being taken up under cluster 1: nuclear weapons. I wish to express my delegation's hope that in the future the draft resolution will make a clear reference to the outcome of one important event — by this, I am referring to the 2000 NPT Review Conference. No one doubts the importance or positive influence of its results on nuclear disarmament.

My delegation also hopes that in the future the draft resolution will include paragraphs from the 2000 NPT Review Conference's Final Document, which is closely linked to the treaties and protocols on nuclear-weapon-free zones to respond to the interests, concerns and aspirations of the African continent, a continent free of weapons of mass destruction.

In order to maintain the unanimity that this draft resolution enjoys and since it concerns an issue of interest to us all, without exception, we further believe that the achievement of its objective will not be a short and simple endeavour or that it ought to impose on us language different from that previously agreed upon in the Final Document of the Review Conference. Maintaining the unanimity that we all seek requires us to work relentlessly and with open minds and to provide convincing arguments to reluctant delegations. This lies at the root and spirit of the document adopted by the NPT Review Conference in the year 2000.

The Chairman: I understand that that was the Algerian delegation's explanation of its position on the draft resolution under consideration. On the same basis, I give the floor to the representative of Egypt.

Mr. Khairat (Egypt): This is a statement by my delegation and not an explanation of vote.

The signing ceremony held in Cairo on 11 April 1996 marked the culmination of tireless African efforts to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa and gave birth to the Treaty of Pelindaba. This truly historic event represents a successful formulation of the commitment undertaken over 35 years ago, when the leaders of Africa adopted a pioneer resolution in July 1964 in Cairo at the first ordinary session of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) Assembly of Heads of State and Government, declaring Africa to be a denuclearized zone. We hope that such genuine regional success will induce other regions to work sincerely towards the same end.

In this vein, we recall that the Cairo Declaration, which was adopted on that same occasion, emphasized that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, especially in regions of tension, such as the Middle East, would enhance global and regional peace and security. Our strong determination to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East has been strengthened even further by this important achievement on the African continent. Not only would a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East provide important confidence-building measures among States in the region, but it would also enhance the security of Africa and the viability of an African nuclear-weapon-free zone.

The Chairman: The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.9/Rev.1.

Mr. Sattar (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now proceed to take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.9/Rev.1, entitled "African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty". This draft resolution was introduced by the representative of the Sudan on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of African States at the Committee's 12th meeting, on 22 October.

The Chairman: The sponsors of the draft resolution have expressed the wish that it be adopted by the Committee without a vote. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.9/Rev.1 was adopted.

The Chairman: I now call upon those representatives who wish to explain their position on the draft resolution just adopted.

Ms. Cortés (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): On many occasions, Spain has unequivocally stated its support for the objectives of the Pelindaba Treaty and its desire that the Treaty should enter quickly into force. Spain believes that nuclear-weapon-free zones, established on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the

States of the regions concerned, make a very important contribution to strengthening the non-proliferation regime and efforts towards nuclear disarmament. But, as it did on a similar text two years ago, my delegation has serious reservations about paragraph 3 of draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.9/Rev.1 and wants to put on record that Spain dissociates itself from the consensus on that paragraph.

Having carefully studied the invitation to States to become parties to Protocol III of the Pelindaba Treaty, my Government determined that it was not appropriate to sign the Protocol, which would have established a redundant control regime over parts of Spanish territory that are at present subject to the general controls established for the entirety of our territory. The parts of Spanish territory included in what is called the Treaty's geographical zone, like the rest of Spain, are part of the European Union and therefore participate in the Union's political integration process. Moreover, all parts of Spanish territory belong to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) zone and fall within the scope of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. Hence, they are within the area covered by the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe and the Vienna Document 1994 on confidence-building measures. For all those reasons, those parts of Spanish territory cannot be included in the zone envisaged in the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty.

As my delegation observed two years ago, the whole of Spanish territory has been denuclearized since the 1976 Treaty of Friendship, Defence and Cooperation between the United States and Spain. Furthermore, our refusal to accept the stationing or placement of nuclear weapons on Spanish territory was included in the Spanish Parliament's authorization to the Government with respect to our accession to the North Atlantic Treaty in October 1981.

Moreover, the referendum on Spain's continued membership in the Atlantic alliance imposed the condition that nuclear weapons would not be stationed or stockpiled on, or introduced into, Spanish territory. My Government has no intention of changing that policy, as we reaffirmed when we joined the NATO military structure effective 1 January 1999.

All of Spain's nuclear installations are subject to twofold controls: those of the International Atomic Energy Agency and those of the European Atomic Energy Commission. These fall under the general Safeguards Agreement between States members of the European Union that do not possess nuclear weapons and the International Atomic Energy Agency. In addition, Spain is a signatory, along with those European Union countries, of an Additional Protocol to the Safeguards Agreement, the text of which is set out in IAEA document INFCIRC/193. That Protocol has been ratified by our Parliament.

Spain has ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT); it is a party to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Materials and to the Convention on Nuclear Safety, and follows the recommendations on nuclear materials contained in IAEA document INFCIRC/225/Rev.4.

Spain has thus undertaken and is implementing obligations that go far beyond those set out in the Pelindaba Treaty and is subject to a system of inspections by the IAEA and the European Atomic Energy Commission. As soon as the Additional Protocol on safeguards for the 13 European Union States that do not possess nuclear weapons enters into force, the safeguards regime that will be applied throughout Spanish territory will surpass the safeguards system established under the Treaty of Pelindaba.

We therefore regret that our proposal was not accepted in the course of informal consultations, and that consensus language acceptable to all countries parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons was eliminated, while paragraph 3 contains language that is not consensus language and that obliged my Government to take the decision it did.

I wish, in conclusion, to note that Spain contributes to the IAEA African Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology for the funding of projects on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in Africa.

The Chairman: Let me draw the attention of members to draft decision A/C.1/56/L.10/Rev.1 on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. As a result of consultations among various delegations, action on the draft decision is being postponed.

I call on the representative of Egypt on a point of order.

Mr. Khairat (Egypt): I should like to ask the reason for the postponement of consideration of the draft decision contained in document A/C.1/56/L.10/Rev.1. It was announced two days ago that the draft decision would be available for consideration today. My delegation is ready for that consideration.

The Chairman: The Chair is not in a position to provide reasons for postponements. The Chair is in the hands of the sponsors of the draft decision. The Chair has been informed that the sponsors wish to postpone action on draft decision A/C.1/56/L.10/Rev.1. That is as far as I can go this afternoon.

I call on the representative of New Zealand on a point of order.

Mr. Borrie (New Zealand): I am happy to attempt to answer the question put by my colleague from Egypt. New Zealand can indeed confirm that the reason that consideration of this draft decision has been postponed is because consultations between delegations continue.

The Chairman: I call on the representative of Egypt on a point of order.

Mr. Khairat (Egypt): My delegation, notwithstanding the procedural debate in the First Committee two days ago on the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/56/L.51/Rev.1, still believes that any delegation has the probative right to ask for postponement of action on any draft resolution in order to avail itself of ample time for further consultations, thus affecting the overall positions of all States on that draft resolution.

The Chairman: Let us now turn to the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/56/L.24, "Nuclear-weapon-free southern hemisphere and adjacent areas".

I call on the representative of Pakistan to explain his position or vote before the voting on this draft resolution.

Mr. Durrani (Pakistan): Pakistan supports the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones freely arrived at among the States of regions concerned. Therefore, we support the objectives of draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.24.

However, we are somewhat perplexed that the draft once again includes, in paragraph 3, a call for the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia. Pakistan sought to promote that objective unsuccessfully for over two decades. However, once our neighbour conducted its nuclear explosions in May 1998 and declared itself a nuclear-weapon State — and Pakistan was obliged to follow suit — the formality of creating a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia became redundant. We have privately asked the sponsors to remove the reference to South Asia from their text, since it flies in the face of the realities of a nuclearized South Asia.

Despite these reservations, Pakistan will vote in favour of the draft resolution, since we support the objective of establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones in regions where they can be freely agreed among the States concerned.

The Chairman: The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.24. We will have three separate votes on the draft resolution: the first on the last three words of paragraph 3, "and South Asia"; the second on the entire paragraph 3; and the third on the draft resolution as a whole.

Recorded votes have been requested.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the voting.

Mr. Sattar (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.24, entitled "Nuclear-weapon-free southern hemisphere and adjacent areas", was introduced by the representative of Brazil at the 13th meeting, on 23 October. The sponsors of the draft resolution are listed in documents A/C.1/56/L.24 and A/C.1/56/INF/2. In addition, the following countries have become sponsors of the draft resolution: Jamaica, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and Zambia.

The Committee will now proceed to take a vote on the deletion of the last three words of paragraph 3, "and South Asia".

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon,

Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Samoa, San Marino, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zambia

Against:

France, India, Pakistan

Abstaining:

Bhutan, Israel, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Micronesia (Federated States of), Myanmar, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The words "and South Asia" in operative paragraph 3 were retained by 132 votes to 3, with 8 abstentions.

The Chairman: I call on the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the second round of voting on draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.24.

Mr. Sattar (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now proceed to vote on operative paragraph 3 of draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.24, which reads:

"*Welcomes* the steps taken to conclude further nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned, and calls upon all States to consider all relevant proposals, including those reflected in its resolutions on the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in the Middle East and South Asia;"

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Samoa, San Marino, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zambia

Against:

France, India

Abstaining:

Bhutan, Israel, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Micronesia (Federated States of), Myanmar, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Operative paragraph 3 of draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.24 was retained by 136 votes to 2, with 8 abstentions.

The Chairman: Let us proceed to the third vote on this draft resolution, on the draft resolution as a whole.

Mr. Sattar (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now proceed to take a vote on draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.24 as a whole.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Samoa, San Marino, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zambia

Against:

France, Monaco, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Abstaining:

India, Israel, Micronesia (Federated States of), Russian Federation, Spain

Draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.24 was adopted by 141 votes to 4, with 5 abstentions.

The Chairman: After the vote taken in the Committee, the representative of Spain has requested the floor.

Mr. Santos (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation fully supports the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of a region. Therefore, we believe that the draft resolution just adopted is important for the strengthening of such areas and cooperation among them. In the past, Spain supported the content of the draft resolution, voting in favour of earlier General Assembly resolutions on the subject, i.e. resolutions 53/77 Q and 54/54 L.

On this occasion, however, as we did at the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly and in view of the retention of operative paragraph 6, on the content of which we have reservations, my delegation has again abstained in the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.24. General Assembly resolutions 53/77 Q, 54/54 L, 55/33 I and the draft resolution we have just adopted contain in their preambular sections a reference to the possibility of holding, among other kinds of exchanges, joint meetings between the States parties and signatories to the treaties on nuclear-weapon-free zones, with the goal of encouraging cooperation among these zones — a goal to which my delegation has no objection.

The text just put to the vote, however, contains in operative paragraph 6 a new idea of a possible international conference that is qualitatively different and, even more, implies moving away from recent agreements on nuclear-weapon-free zones. In fact, the idea of a possible international conference, as mentioned in operative paragraph 6, has not been mentioned at any time — neither in the Disarmament Commission's April 1999 report on the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones in accordance with agreements freely entered into by the States of a

region, nor in the sections on nuclear-weapon-free zones contained in the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

Spain actively participated in both sets of negotiations. We welcome the fact that both resulted in a satisfactory, though difficult, consensus. We believe that the base built by those two documents is sufficient and needs no further legal or political decisions that might justify convening an international conference. Therefore, my Government cannot endorse such a proposal nor, consequently, support the draft resolution.

Mr. Seetharam (India): My delegation has requested the floor to explain its vote with regard to operative paragraph 3 of the draft resolution, which refers to the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia. This proposal goes contrary to the well-established principles regarding the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones: these zones must be established on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned.

The contradiction in operative paragraph 3 is even more apparent when seen in the context of current realities. The proposal for a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia has as much validity as nuclear-weapon-free zones in East Asia, Western Europe or North America. Given the distortions and contradictions in operative paragraph 3, we have voted against this paragraph and therefore also against the retention of the last three words in that paragraph, for which a separate vote was called, while abstaining on the resolution as whole.

Mr. de la Fortelle (France) (*spoke in French*): I asked for the floor on behalf of the United States of America, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and France, in order to explain our position on draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.24, entitled "Nuclear-weapon-free southern hemisphere and adjacent areas".

As in preceding years, our three delegations have voted against this draft resolution because it does not always adequately address our essential problem. It still contains a basic ambiguity. Let me briefly recall the reason.

We remain concerned by the guiding idea of this draft resolution, which is to lay the groundwork for a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the southern hemisphere. Given that the entire land territory of the southern hemisphere, save some small islands, has already been integrated into nuclear-weapon-free zones, the only area that remains to be covered is the high seas. Some delegations assert that that is not the aim of this draft resolution. They stress that the draft resolution refers to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. But if this new zone does not cover the high seas, what will it add to already existing zones? As a result, we can only conclude that, for some, the goal is really to create a new zone that would cover certain international waters. Such a measure would contradict international laws and would therefore be unacceptable for all delegations that are committed to abide by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

I would like to underscore that our vote on draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.24 should in no way be interpreted as a retreat from our deep commitment to the treaties of Tlatelolco, Rarotonga and Pelindaba and the Antarctic Treaty. Similarly, we have no fundamental objection to establishing new nuclear-weapon-free zones which could make an important contribution both to regional and global security, provided that they are supported by all States in the region concerned and adjacent areas and are covered by the appropriate treaties, including the provision of the general safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Mr. León González (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): I am sorry to interrupt our work here. I have asked for the floor, because the way in which the Secretary requested us to proceed in voting on the last three words of operative paragraph 3 of draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.24 somewhat confused my delegation. It seems to us that one of the fundamental principles for the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones is that they should be established in accordance with freely agreed arrangements among the States concerned. Therefore, we consider that the inclusion of these last three words in paragraph 3 of draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.24 is not consistent with that principle. Therefore, we think that the parties concerned did not reach an agreement on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region. Accordingly, we would like the record to show that in the voting on the retention of the last three words of operative paragraph 3, Cuba had the intention of abstaining.

The Chairman: The statement of the representative of Cuba is duly recorded by the Secretariat. Before proceeding to action on draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.25, "The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East", I shall now call on those representatives who wish to speak in explanation of position or vote before the voting.

Mr. McGinnis (United States of America): The United States opposes draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.25, "The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East", as we have every year since this one-sided initiative took shape. Everyone in this room knows that the overriding political fact of the Middle East is the regrettable lack of a peace settlement between Israel and its Arab neighbours. My country's deep concern about these circumstances and our efforts to promote an enduring reconciliation are likewise too well known to require further comment today.

The draft resolution before us does not meet the fundamental test of fairness and balance. The text confines itself to expressions of concern about activities of a single country, whereas it omits any reference to other questions and issues that relate to the problem of nuclear-weapons proliferation in the region. For example, the draft resolution does not mention the Middle Eastern country that has been found to be not in compliance with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). It likewise does not allude to the steps that some nations in the region are taking to develop the capacity to acquire nuclear weapons, even though they are parties to the NPT. Further, we do not find any comment in the text on the failure of some Middle Eastern States to fulfil their NPT obligations by concluding safeguards agreements, nor do we find a recommendation that Middle East States sign the Additional Protocols to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Safeguards Agreement. The United States regrets the draft resolution's selective use of one-sided passages from the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference. This political distortion does not enhance the NPT regime. In an overall sense, the draft resolution does not advance the cause of non-proliferation, and is more likely to impair it.

For all these reasons, the United States will once again vote "no". We call on others to join us in doing so.

Mr. Durrani (Pakistan): I have asked for the floor to express our support for the draft resolution entitled "The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East", as contained in document A/C.1/56/L.25. However, my delegation would like to express our reservations on the sixth preambular paragraph and on operative paragraph 3, which call for universal application of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Pakistan is not a party to the NPT. As a State that possesses nuclear weapons, we obviously cannot accede to the NPT or accept these provisions in draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.25.

Mr. Goussous (Jordan): Jordan has always been committed to the cause of international peace and security. Over the years, we have advocated a peaceful settlement to the conflict in the Middle East — one that could lead to just, comprehensive and durable peace in the region. We realize, as do many others within and outside the region, that for durable peace to be achieved, positive steps towards confidence-building between the parties have to be taken. Additional steps must also be taken to free the region of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction.

We regret the continued reluctance of the only State in the Middle East with considerable nuclear-weapons capability to adhere to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and to place all its nuclear installations and facilities under the full-scope safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency. Their unwillingness to do so poses a threat to international peace and security and to the peace in our region.

Mr. Bar (Israel): The First Committee is again called upon to vote on a draft resolution entitled "The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East", contained this year in document A/C.1/56/L.25 — a draft resolution that is blatantly one-sided, contentious and divisive, and undermines rather than enhances confidence among the States of the region.

Since the time that draft resolutions on this topic were first introduced, many developments have occurred that are directly related to nuclear proliferation and to other forms of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, not the least of which is the sobering experience gained by the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Action Team. In addition, efforts are under way to acquire weapons of mass destruction and missile

capabilities in the region, as our delegation pointed out during the general debate.

The bias of this draft resolution stems from it ignoring the fact that the real risk of proliferation in the Middle East emanates from countries that, despite being parties to international treaties, do not comply with their relevant international obligations. These countries are engaged in ongoing efforts to acquire weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles, efforts that have destabilizing effects not only on the region but on a global scale as well. The draft resolution chooses to ignore the profound hostility towards Israel on the part of these countries, which continue to reject any form of peaceful reconciliation and coexistence in the region. Adopting a draft resolution that does not reflect this reality will not serve the greater objective of curbing proliferation in the Middle East. Draft resolutions regarding the complex arms control problems in the Middle East should focus on objective ways to address them as they exist.

This draft resolution focuses entirely on one country that has never threatened its neighbours nor has it abrogated its obligations under any disarmament treaty. Moreover, it singles out Israel in a manner in which no other United Nations Member State is being singled out in the First Committee. Singling out Israel is counterproductive to confidence-building and peace in the region, and does not lend this body any credibility.

Israel's supreme objective is to achieve peace and security. Its non-proliferation and arms control policy is aimed at supporting this objective. The constructive approach adopted by Israel over the years towards arms control and non-proliferation efforts was described in our statement in the general debate. It is best demonstrated by our attitude towards the draft resolution on a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, despite substantive reservations regarding its modalities, and it is greatly undermined by the introduction of this biased draft resolution.

Last year, new language was introduced into this draft resolution. This language is an unbalanced and selective representation of the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, using that Treaty for yet another political assault against Israel. The unbalanced approach remains despite the reference made to the need for compliance of countries with their international obligations, which refers to Iraq. The fact that for some countries the language of this draft resolution is considered balanced is a source of deep disappointment for us.

The First Committee should not become a venue for political discrimination. We would like to call upon representatives to vote against this draft resolution.

The Chairman: The representative of Iraq has asked for the floor.

Mr. Matook (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): I do not intend to speak at length before voting on the draft resolution before us. However, may I suggest that one must ask the representative who speaks about compliance with international treaties and United Nations resolutions, which international resolutions his country complies with? And what is the nature of its nuclear arsenal, as well as its arsenal of weapons of mass destruction and their position? The Zionist entity is the only party in the Middle East region that possesses these destructive weapons. It is the only party against which Security Council resolution 487 (1981) was adopted. It is the only party in the Middle East that has not acceded to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and to the safeguards regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency. It is the only party that was cited by the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. That Conference referred to the Zionist entity as the only party that had not acceded to that Treaty, and called upon that party to accede to it.

The Chairman: I take it that this was an explanation of the representative of Iraq's position on the draft resolution before us.

The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.25.

A recorded vote has been requested. We will again vote twice, because we will have a separate vote on the sixth preambular paragraph of this draft resolution. Afterwards, we will have a vote on the draft resolution as a whole.

I give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the voting.

Mr. Sattar (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft

resolution A/C.1/56/L.25, entitled "The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East". This draft resolution was introduced by the representative of Egypt on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the League of Arab States at the 13th meeting, on 23 October.

The Committee will proceed to take a separate vote on the sixth preambular paragraph, which reads:

> "*Recognizing with satisfaction* that, in the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Conference undertook to make determined efforts towards the achievement of the goal of universality of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and called upon those remaining States not parties to the Treaty to accede to it, thereby accepting an international legally binding commitment not to acquire nuclear weapons or nuclear explosive devices and to accept International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards on all their nuclear activities, and underlined the necessity of universal adherence to the Treaty and of strict compliance by all parties with their obligations under the Treaty,"

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Samoa, San Marino, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zambia

Against:

India, Israel

Abstaining:

Bhutan, Cuba, Ethiopia, Marshall Islands, Pakistan, Rwanda

The sixth preambular paragraph of draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.25 was retained by 139 votes to 2, with 6 abstentions.

[Subsequently, the delegation of Ethiopia informed the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour.]

The Chairman: Now we will proceed to take action on the whole of draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.25.

I give the floor back to the Secretary.

Mr. Sattar (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.25 as a whole.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece,

Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Samoa, San Marino, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zambia

Against:

Israel, Micronesia (Federated States of), United States of America

Abstaining:

Australia, Cameroon, Canada, Ethiopia, India, Marshall Islands, Rwanda

Draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.25 was adopted by 139 votes to 3, with 7 abstentions.

The Chairman: I shall now give the floor to those representatives who wish to explain their vote or position after the voting.

Mr. Westdal (Canada): I take the floor to explain Canada's vote on draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.25, entitled "The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East".

Canadian policy regarding the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is well known. We call on all States to accede to, and abide by, this Treaty. Canada supports the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT, which calls on all States not yet party to the Treaty to accede to the Treaty as non-nuclear-weapon States. However, in our view, draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.25 fails in its operative paragraphs to deal with our concerns with respect to compliance with the NPT. Canada maintained its abstention on this draft resolution because, like last year's text, the draft resolution fails to deal appropriately with both adherence to, and full compliance with, the NPT.

Mr. Seetharam (India): The Indian delegation has requested the floor after the voting to explain its position on the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/56/L.25.

India abstained on the draft resolution as a whole, and cast a negative vote on the sixth preambular paragraph, which makes a reference to the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), on which our position is well known. Besides, we believe that the focus of this draft resolution should necessarily be limited to the region it purports to address. India considers that the multifarious issues in this draft resolution have received widespread consideration in the international community, and hopes that it will be possible to make progress on the issues involved in the coming years through positive contributions by the concerned States of the region.

The Chairman: We shall now take up a draft resolution under cluster 3, on outer space in its disarmament aspects. In that connection, the Committee has before it draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.7, entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space".

I shall now give the floor to those representatives who wish to explain their vote or position before the voting.

Mr. Durrani (Pakistan): I have taken the floor to reiterate our full support for the draft resolution on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, contained in document A/C.1/56/L.7.

The rationale for Pakistan's consistent support for the objectives of the draft resolution has been spelled out clearly in our statements in the General Assembly and the Conference on Disarmament. We also fully subscribe to the position on this subject contained in the statements of the Non-Aligned Movement and the G-21 at Geneva.

Despite the massive build-up of nuclear arms during the cold war, a measure of stability and

predictability in military affairs was established on the basis of agreements and understandings, both formal and informal. An essential element of strategic stability was the resolve of the international community not to allow the arms race to spread to outer space. After the end of the cold war, it is essential to promote nuclear disarmament while avoiding any action that could erode the existing strategic equilibrium and lead to a renewal of the arms race in new and unpredictable directions. The long-standing international commitment to keep outer space free of weapons needs to be formalized in a manner that fills the existing gaps in the international regime regarding the use of outer space for peaceful purposes.

The Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament reflected the agreement of the international community to avoid an arms race in outer space and stated that

> "In order to prevent an arms race in outer space, further measures should be taken and ... international negotiations held" (*resolution S-10/2, para. 80*).

With the advancement in technology in general — and in particular with regard to military technology, which seeks new domains — the danger of the militarization of outer space is a possibility no longer only in theory, but also in reality. The agenda item on the prevention of an arms race in outer space has been on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament for a long time. Much useful work has been done. There have been important discussions about definitions, principles, confidence-building measures and codes of conduct with regard to outer space. It is generally agreed that existing legal instruments regarding outer space do not fully cover all possible means of precluding an arms race in space. In the face of advancing technologies and the fact that a growing number of countries are developing the capabilities to place assets in space, it is imperative that action is taken now in the Conference on Disarmament to negotiate a regime that comprehensively outlaws any kind of weaponization of outer space.

Today, when the revived spirit of multilateral cooperation in the area of peace and security is expected to yield dividends for disarmament, it is necessary to reach an agreement on a mandate for an ad hoc committee in the Conference on Disarmament on preventing an arms race in outer space. This will enable the Conference on Disarmament to reach an agreement on its programme of work and to commence negotiations on other priority items on its agenda.

The Chairman: I must admit that it is sometimes difficult to find one's way in the jungle of the rules of procedure. As the representative of Pakistan began his statement, it dawned on us that his statement was out of order because he is a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.7 and is therefore not allowed to speak before action is taken on the draft resolution. I apologize.

Mr. Meléndez-Barahona (El Salvador) (*spoke in Spanish*): I simply wanted to ask that El Salvador be included in the list of sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.7.

The Chairman: The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.7.

A recorded vote has been requested.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the voting.

Mr. Sattar (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.7, entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space", was introduced by the representative of Sri Lanka at the 14th meeting, on 24 October. The sponsors of the draft resolution are listed in documents A/C.1/56/L.7 and A/C.1/56/INF/2. In addition, the following countries have become sponsors of the draft resolution: Brunei Darussalam, Bangladesh and El Salvador.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India,

Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Samoa, San Marino, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zambia

Against:

None

Abstaining:

Israel, Micronesia (Federated States of), United States of America

Draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.7 was adopted by 145 votes to none, with 3 abstentions.

The Chairman: I call on the representative of Belgium for an explanation of vote on the draft resolution just adopted.

Mr. Lint (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union on draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.7, "Prevention of an arms race in outer space". The countries of Central and Eastern Europe associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia — and the associated countries of Cyprus, Malta and Turkey, as well as Norway, as a country of the European Free Trade Association member of the European Economic Area, associate themselves with this statement.

The European Union voted in favour of the draft resolution on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, but we feel it necessary to clarify the significance of our vote in order to avoid any misunderstanding. We would recall that the Conference on Disarmament is the sole international body to conduct multilateral disarmament negotiations. It is in that body that any decision should be taken on work to prevent an arms race in outer space. The European Union is prepared to support the establishment of a subsidiary body of the Conference on Disarmament on this topic, the mandate and nature of which must enjoy unanimous support.

We wish to recall nonetheless that the negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on a non-discriminatory and universal treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear devices is a priority for the European Union.

The Chairman: We shall now proceed to consider draft resolutions under cluster 4, conventional weapons. Here, again, on the same basis that was applied this afternoon for the delegations of Algeria and Egypt, I call on the representative of South Africa for a general statement.

Mr. Du Preez (South Africa): I appreciate your making an exception, Sir. My delegation asked for the floor to address the programme budget implications issued by the Secretariat in document A/C.1/56/L.61. In this regard, we would like to thank the Secretariat for preparing a very comprehensive programme budget implications document on the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/56/L.47, entitled "The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects".

As a primary sponsor of that draft resolution, South Africa is particularly pleased that the Secretariat managed to source from existing budgetary provisions adequate funding for the conference servicing required for the first biennial meeting of States contemplated in paragraph 2 of the draft resolution, as well as for the meetings of a group of experts to examine the feasibility of developing an international instrument for tracing illicit small arms and light weapons, referred to in paragraph 10. No additional appropriation of funds would therefore be required for conference servicing for these purposes.

My delegation furthermore fully supports the Secretariat's assessment that, with regard to the 2006 conference referred to in paragraph 1, it would be

neither possible nor appropriate to estimate at this session of the General Assembly the related cost-servicing requirements for that conference. We agree that such resource requirements would have to be reflected in the context of the budget outlined in the proposed programme budget for the relevant biennium.

We consider the estimated additional budgetary requirements to enable the Secretariat to execute the responsibilities that we, the States, have tasked it with in terms of the Programme of Action to be a real bargain. The additional expense of $560,000 is a small price to pay to implement the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms And Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.

We therefore consider that the Committee should now be able to adopt the draft resolution without a vote.

The Chairman: I call on the representative of the United States on a point of order.

Mr. McGinnis (United States of America): We have heard the intervention of our South African colleague, but since we have just received the programme budget implications and have not had a chance to review them, we ask that action on this draft resolution be postponed in order for our authorities to have a chance to review it.

The Chairman: I recall that when I enumerated the draft resolutions that would be coming up today, I mentioned that as far as draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.47 is concerned, the action to be taken is dependent on the appearance of the programme budget implications. As a matter of fact, the programme budget implications document appeared this afternoon. Since the Chair is obviously bound by the rules of procedure and the decisions of the General Assembly, I am obliged to inform colleagues that we have not had the required period of time between the issuing of a document and the taking of action on it. That required period of time is 24 hours.

I have to announce this and inform my colleagues of it in all fairness, but the Chair is obviously in the hands of the Committee. We have clearly to decide what we should do, but that should be done formally and in accordance with the rules of procedure.

I call on the representative of Côte d'Ivoire.

Mr. Ahipeaud Guebo (Côte d'Ivoire): I do not know if the Committee is going to action on this draft resolution,

(*spoke in Spanish*)

but we have asked for the floor to state Côte d'Ivoire's intention to join the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.47.

The Chairman: I call on the representative of Egypt.

Mr. Khairat (Egypt): The draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/56/L.47 has, I believe, been discussed and tabled for a very long time. I understand, however, that the programme budget implication was issued only today. But I ask that you take into consideration rule 120 of the rules of procedure, which gives the Chairman of the Committee the right to waive the 24-hour waiting period before proceeding to take action. I request that we set aside this 24-hour interval and take a decision today.

The Chairman: Are there any other delegations coming to my rescue? I wonder if the delegation of the United States has strong feelings about not proceeding with an action today on document A/C.1/56/L.47. As I said — and I had to say this — formally speaking, we did not have the 24 hours. The practice shows that sometimes we can waive this rule and proceed to action. I want to have everyone on board. I do not want to create any dissension around this.

This is why I am asking the United States delegation, which had a problem based on the formalities of our proceedings, if we can actually proceed take action this afternoon on draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.47. If the interested delegations insist on their positions, we will certainly have to think about a ruling of the Chairman, which clearly will create more enemies and more friends. It is a very mixed blessing for me. But, obviously, I have no other alternative. So again I am asking the First Committee to see if the feeling is that we could proceed to take action on L.47 in spite of this small lack of the necessary period of time.

I call on the representative of the United States.

Mr. McGinnis (United States of America): I understand your position, and I think that we all want to move the work of the Committee along. We were under the understanding that the sponsors of this draft

resolution were prepared to postpone the vote. We have been extensively involved in consultation throughout the course of our meetings here in the First Committee. We are very supportive of the substantive content of this draft resolution. But I am under very strict instructions to allow the programme budget implication (PBI) to be reviewed by my authorities, and I think that we would be able to act on this first thing on Monday. I just ask the indulgence of the rest of the Committee that we be allowed to look at the PBI.

The Chairman: I am looking to South Africa, Egypt and others to react to this humble request from the United States.

I call on the representative of South Africa.

Mr. Du Preez (South Africa): Since you asked me, Sir, to take the floor I shall gladly do so. It was certainly not the intention of my statement to put any pressure on any delegation. We simply wanted to express our appreciation to the Secretariat for the contents of the programme budget implication. It is any delegation's right to ask for a deferment of the vote in terms of the rules of procedure, and we would respect that right.

The Chairman: I have to say when we sat down early this afternoon, I was under the impression that the question of postponement was settled, but as we proceeded, it turned out that this was not exactly the case. This is why we are in the present situation.

I call on the representative of Egypt.

Mr. Khairat (Egypt): My delegation will not insist on its previous proposal to waive the 24 hours. As I have said before, it is the right of any delegation to ask for a postponement for further consultations or to turn back to the authors who rectify and add to any resolution. I was hoping that this would extend to all delegations.

The Chairman: I do appreciate your understanding and civility. As I said earlier, it is a sheer delight to work with you. Therefore, let me say that we will get back to document A/C.1/56/L.47 first thing Monday morning.

Let me turn to cluster 7, which is entitled "Disarmament machinery". We have draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.18, on United Nations regional centres for peace and disarmament.

Do any delegations wish to explain their position or vote before action is taken on L.18? I see no requests from the floor.

The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.18.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the voting.

Mr. Sattar (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.18, entitled "United Nations regional centres for peace and disarmament". It was introduced by the representative of South Africa on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries at the 17th meeting, on 30 October. I would also like to draw the attention of members to statements submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly contained in document A/C.1/56/L.58.

The Chairman: The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.18 have expressed the wish that it be adopted by the Committee without a vote. If I hear no objection, I will take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.18 was adopted.

The Chairman: On Monday, 5 November, we will take action on remaining draft resolutions, contained in informal working paper No. 5, which will be made available to all members of the Committee.

I now call on the Secretary for an announcement.

Mr. Sattar (Secretary of the Committee): I would just like to inform the Committee that the delegation of Lebanon has joined in the sponsorship of draft resolution A/C.1/56/L.35/Rev.1.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.